DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 113 782 EA 007 545

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TITLE	Modernizing the Management of the Educational System. The Fundamentals of Educational Planning: Lecture-Discussion Series No. 35.
INSTITUTION	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Paris (France). International Inst. for Educational Planning.
REPORT NO	IIEP-TM-35-69
PUB DATE	69
NOTE	15p.
AVAILABLE FROM	IIEP Publications, 7-9 rue Eugene-Delacroix, 75016 Paris, France ($0.25, distribution charges)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.76 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Administrative Organization; *Administrative Principles; *Educational Administration; Educational Change; Educational Objectives; *Educational Planning; Educational Policy; *Management; *Models

ABSTRACT

One of the main inadequacies in educational management is that planning is not firmly integrated within administration. Five basic processes may be distinguished in administration. The first is planning, or determining what shall be done. The second element of the administrative process is organizing, or defining the administrative structures and activities necessary to carry out the plan. The third is assembling the resources needed to execute the plan. The fourth process is supervising, the day-to-day guidance of operations. The fifth element is controlling, or seeing that operating results conform to the plan. There are different types of plans, including goals, single-use plans, standing plans, and policies. A clear recognition of goals is necessary if planning is to mean anything. Single-use plans design a course of action to fit a specific situation. A standing plan covers a continual action that can be used again and again. A policy is a general plan of action that guides the operation of an enterprise. The budget is an important instrument for coordinating purposeful and effective planning. Modernization of educational administration requires that adequate arrangements be made for the formulation, decision, and implementation of these different types of plans at appropriate levels within the educational system. (Author/JG)

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The Fundamentals of Educational Planning: Lecture - Discussion Series

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EA 007 545

Unesco : International Institute for Educational Planning

1969
IIEP/TM/35/69
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INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

7, rue Eugène Delacroix

Paris 16e, France

MODERNIZING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

by Raymond F. Lyons

This lecture is part of 'Fundamentals of Educational Planning; Lecture-Discussion Series' a controlled experiment undertaken by the International Institute for Educational Planning in collaboration with a limited number of organizations and individuals aiming at the development of efficient teaching materials in the field of educational planning. By their very nature these materials, which draw upon tape recordings, transcriptions and summary notes of seminars, lectures and discussions conducted by IIEP as part of its training and research programme, are informal and not subject to the type of editing customary for published documents. They are therefore not to be considered as 'official publications'.

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The subject before us this morning is modernizing educational management. The issue which we shall discuss was set out in 'The World Educational Crisis' and I shall read you the section on page 120 which is relevant to our deliberations. Mr. Philip H. Coombs wrote the following:

> "The issue for us is not the individual ability and moral worth of educational administrators, their devotion to duty, or their taste for hard work. These are often of a very high order. The issue instead is whether the basic managerial arrangements of educational systems are adequate to the tasks before them. Are they well oriented to these tasks? Do those responsible for major decisions and direction of the system have the right kinds of specialized help and information flows? Do they have the appropriate analytical concepts and tools to know what is going on within the system, to assess its performance both internally and in relation to its environment, to size up its options and plan its future, and to monitor the implementation of such plans? Does the management process of the system draw on all the available resources - both within and outside the system - for maximum strength and effectiveness? Are the arrangements for recruitment and career development of various sorts of management personnel well suited to the needs? Are there adequate means for seeing where changes are needed in the system, for determining the best sorts of changes, then getting them adopted?"

The central point in Mr. Coombs' valuable analysis, which we shall discuss this morning, is whether the managerial arrangements of the educational system are adequate to the tasks before them. I shall advance as a working hypothesis that one of the main elements of inadequacy in these arrangements is that planning, which is the essential for change and development, is not firmly integrated within administration. The concept of educational planning, such as is generally accepted is too narrow and the realistic operational concept, which is the necessary one, is frequently not understood and applied.

I shall equate management with administration. I do not think we need to get involved in a theological discussion on whether administration and management are the same thing, as for the purpose of today's discussion I shall assume they are.

What are the concepts of administration and of planning which I shall employ? They represent, broadly speaking, the application to education of the ideas developed by Professor William H. Newman in his masterly book, which you should consult in the library, 'Administrative Action, the techniques of organization and management'.(1) Professor Newman is professor of Democratic Business Enterprise at the University of Columbia, New York. His

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(1) Second edition. Pitman (London) 1963. 45/-.

work has been concentrated on the problems of administrative action in the private sector, where profit based on efficient operation, and dismissal if it is not achieved, is the main criterion. His analysis has, in my view considerable interest and validity for the public sector, where the satisfaction of government demands is the objective, and dismissal of either politicians or civil servants is often a most difficult business, seldom directly related to the criterion of efficient operation.

Turning to concepts, one may say that administration is the guidance, leadership and control of the effort of a group of individuals towards some common goal. Five basic processes may be distinguished in administration.

First, planning which Newman defines as "determining what shall be done". This covers a wide range of actions: clarification of goals, establishment of policies, mapping out of programmes and campaigns, determining specific methods or procedures and fixing day to day schedules. I would ask you to note that this definition of planning is very different from the idea of 'the plan' which, at least in one country represented here, goes into a pigeon-hole, which is subject to political acclaim but about which nothing is done. It is very different; it is a process in which goals are defined in the light of careful study of reality and of requirements, of establishing policies, of obtaining specific decisions, mapping out programmes and determining methods and procedures, of fixing day to day schedules.

Newman defines the second element of the administrative process as organizing. I would ask you to note also that planning by itself without the rest of the other elements specified is meaningless. Planning is, or should be, part of the total process of administration.

Organizing, is defined as grouping into administrative units the activities necessary to draw up and carry out the plan and defining the relationships among the executives and workers in such units.

The third element is assembling resources, i.e., arranging the use of executive personnel, capital, facilities and other things or services needed to execute the plan.

The fourth element is supervising, that is, day to day guidance of operations. This includes issuing instructions or - as it has been picturesquely put by another writer - "lighting a fire in the bellies of those who are to carry them out", co-ordinating detailed work, cultivating good personal relationships by the boss with his subordinates.

The fifth element is controlling, seeing that the operating results conform as nearly as possible to the plans. This has been described by others as evaluating. It involves establishment of standards, comparisons of actual results against the standard and undertaking the necessary corrective action when performance deviates from the plan.

In addition to these five processes, there are non-delegated activities, such as outside contacts, public relations and so on. But you will observe that administration is inextricably tied to actual operations and if planning is to be meaningful, then planning must be inextricably tied to this process of transforming goals and plans into reality.

One can also look at the subject in terms of applying the process of administration to the defined areas or subjects. For example, in a firm you can break down the areas of operation into sales, purchasing, production, accounting, finance personnel and so on. In a ministry of education, you have operational responsibility for levels of education, building, books and equipment, purchases, transport, finance, etc. The process of administration can be broken down into its major parts and the content of operation of this administration can be broken down into its appropriate subject areas also. The nub of the problem is how to use planning in this process, so that the elements of time, space, functional structure and human behaviour are co-ordinated to get defined jobs in the different areas of the educational system well done.

Planning has been defined as deciding in advance what is to be done and the plan is the projected course of action. But there are different types of plans. These include goals, single-use plans, standing plans and policies. They range from formulations of broad objectives down to detailed plans for the activity of a single individual on one day.

To begin with goals. If planning is to be meaningful there must be clear official recognition, on an appropriately durable basis, of the goals to be achieved. In education, a public service, recognition of goals is a political act, and it is frequently difficult to ensure that decisions are taken on the basis of the facts and the balance of advantage. Half the trouble when we examine existing educational plans and the divorce of 'plans' from planning arises from the fact that there are frequently no clear political directives of any duration according to which goals may be maintained, followed through and used as a basis for real planning. One reason for this is political instability. I speak not only of governments changing frequently but of goals being frequently changed in the light of political pressures. In some countries represented here, the higher civil service posts are subject to political nomination; if the government changes the senior civil servants change also and their view and advice may be at variance with those of their predecessors. But, there is, in addition, another and more common factor, namely that persons who advise governments and who may have put in a lot of work in preparing the basis for decisions concerning goals may find that political pressures are such that from one month to the next, the political leadership changes the nature of the goals which are to be sought. Those of us who, for example, had the chance of studying the work on educational development in the light of manpower factors in Uganda, were impressed by the fact that despite initial acceptance of the goal of making education conform

in its general development to certain essential manpower criteria, the political pressure for secondary general education was such that from one month to the next, it was impossible to maintain the levels of enrolment in secondary education roughly in accordance with the estimates which had been made of job possibilities in the country and of the desirable balance between secondary education and other levels and types.

The difficulty of formulating and acting on goals in the public service is much greater than in private enterprise where profit criteria is the most important factor. In public organization, we have to remember that administration is public precisely because the community has decided that the interests involved are such as to be beyond the proper scope of private profit; whether we consider defence, health or education, we see in the development of the public sector a history of gradual movement towards public control and of subsequent difficulty of public control in the light of new factors, new pressures which are continually coming into being. Therefore, one of the reasons why public educational management is less effective than the management of a private concern is precisely because in the establishment of goals and in realising them, public administration in its operation, in its staffing, in its relationship with the government is subject to a continuous, delicate and involved process of negotiation and adaptation in the light of a cumulative series of pressures.

I think we can agree that a clear recognition of goals to be achieved is essential if planning is to mean anything. Each executive, from the permanent head of the ministry to the teacher should, in principle, know the aims of his particular activities. The difficulty is that, in many cases, these aims are not precisely formulated, they are not constant and they are not adapted to change and development for the simple reason that, in many cases, the problem of defining goals for change and development is beyond the administrative and political capacity of the ministry at a given time. Before administration can function clearly in terms of formulation of goals, you have to have certain favourable political conditions which, in the countries represented around this table are not present to the desired extent.

Let us put the problem of goals in another way. Let us say that educational plans as they exist in many countries represent a series of goals for education over the long and medium term. They frequently take account of, or pay lip service to, the two major constraints namely job possibilities and what education should do about them and the amount of money which is likely to be available for education. They sometimes present general proposals for making the operation of the existing system more efficient. But their usefulness as plans is always immensely increased when they are supported by a structure of single use plans and standing plans through which they can be realised. This is at the heart of the problem of modernizing educational management. If the first task is to define goals in the light of analysis, the second task is to map out a course of action to fulfil the mission taking into account budgetary possibilities.

In plotting the course of action, the administrator can make use of single-use plans which lay out the course of action to fit a specific situation and are finished when the goals are reached and standing plans which are designed to be used again and again.

Single-use plans, include major programmes, projects and special programmes.

A major programme outlines the principal steps or individual projects needed to accomplish an important objective. It indicates who will be accountable for each step and the approximate timing of each. I ask you to reflect on this definition of the major programme and to ask yourself how many plans in your countries have been accompanied by major programmes which outlined the principal steps or individual projects needed to accomplish an objective, which state who will be accountable for each step and the approximate timing of each.

To take one example. Let us suppose that an educational plan contains, among its various objectives, a major programme for the establishment of a system of full-time training for technicians at a defined post-secondary level. We can distinguish the following seven elements in such a major programme.

(a) An employment survey to determine job possibilities and the necessary scope of the programme.

(b) Location, and preparation of detailed projects for the building of training centres.

(c) Construction of the building schedules.

(d) Training and recruitment of teachers (the hallmark of good planning).

(e) Supply of books, material and equipment.

(f) Provision for capital and recurrent requirements of money.

(g) Ensuring the co-operation of teachers, parents and pupils.

Major programmes have been carried out effectively, with all the basic spadework, co-operation and co-ordination which are entailed, in countries where there is no over-all 'plan'. Where there is an over-all plan they frequently have not been; planning has not been linked with the different stages involved in administration.

The point we want to make is that a master programme which is followed through is the iron rule in private enterprise. Is it the iron rule in educational administration? When you think of your own experience, how many steps in drawing up an implementation have been adequately carried through in the case of a major programme for a certain type of education? If you were to assess work in terms of this sort of approach, how would you judge it? Would you say that you have drawn up and carried through a programme reasonably adequately in management terms or would you say that, for various reasons, you left out of your programme many vital things, that your master schedule was not clearly constructed, that the key points were not clearly outlined, that the major responsibilities were not clearly defined, that the timing was not observed?

The next single-use plan is the project. This can be a clear-cut and distinct element of a major programme, or an individual piece of work, e.g. replacement of an inadequate school building. To take another example, the administration of a large system of private education decides that salary administration should be based on job evaluation. The initial planning and work is assigned as a separate project. The following steps are involved.

(a) Organizing and staffing of the project.

(b) Setting policies for the project.

(c) Preparing job descriptions of the teaching staff.

(d) Evaluating the jobs.

(e) Making market surveys of wage rates for comparable positions.

(f) Developing a wage structure.

(g) Installing the plan.

(h) Informing and negotiating with employees.

Special programmes are the third type of single-use plan. They deal with one phase of operations. Unlike projects, special programmes contain no clear completion date or point; they cover a continuing problem. For example, the replacement of high level personnel in the Ministry of Education. How would you deal with this exceptional example? The Permanent Secretary is 58, retirement age is 60. The Chief Education Officer is 54, suffers from ulcers and alcoholism, is not very useful. The Head of the Planning Office is 52 and technically lacks a lot of knowledge. The Finance Officer is 54; he is

competent but unco-operative. The requirement is to develop a programme for replacement. This is the work of the personnel division of the Ministry. It is a delicate job involving personnel selection and training of good people as well as considerable tact.

Standing plans represent the bricks and mortar of education and the day to day management of it. A standing plan covers a continued action which can be used again and again. One example is the timetable of a defined level and grade of education. Another is the method of teaching. Another is the way an inspector undertakes his duties. When we talk about the improvement of education itself we can conceive this improvement in terms of reform of the standing plans of the educational system, in its diverse forms of operation. This involved consideration of policies also. Policy is a general plan of action that guides members of an enterprise in the conduct of its operation, e.g. policy in respect of hiring teachers according to their qualifications. It is important to remember that, as far as standing plans and policies are concerned, educational administrators are bound by legal documents and printed instructions. Their reform is often a political as well as an administrative process.

We should remember the importance of the budget as an instrument for co-ordinating effective planning. It supplements and acts as a control for purposeful and integrated planning. It can help show where unproductive and diverging work can be avoided. It can be a guide in terms of indicating blockages in achieving programmes. The budget is a mirror in money terms of what is to be done. If the first task is to define the objectives in the light of analysis, the second task is to map out the single use and standing plans taking into account budgetary possibilities. Budget programming is the counterpart of plan implementation in terms of real resources.

Newman's model of industrial planning, which I have stated in its crude essentials, gives us a tool with which to approach the operation of the basic managerial arrangements of education.

I have not sought to show that an educational 'plan' is useless, nor do I believe that it is. But when we talk about planning we tend to equate it with goal-making at the highest level. When we look at a perspective plan we may find that it is the intellectual basis, the analytical basis for the long-term development of education. But we do not know to what extent the politicians, who have approved the plan, have assured themselves about the appropriate breakdown of the plan, realistic in budgetary terms, into single-use plans and new standing plans. Without these the 'plan' does not mean much.

The preparation of this structure of plans is one important part of the matter. All the more so since the major task is making what exists more efficient rather than adding more of the same prescription. But this is not just a task of a planning office, though such an office is clearly essential. It is also a task for the teacher, the school inspector, the administrator, the high officials and the ministers. It represents an enormous amount of collective work by which education is improved and expanded.

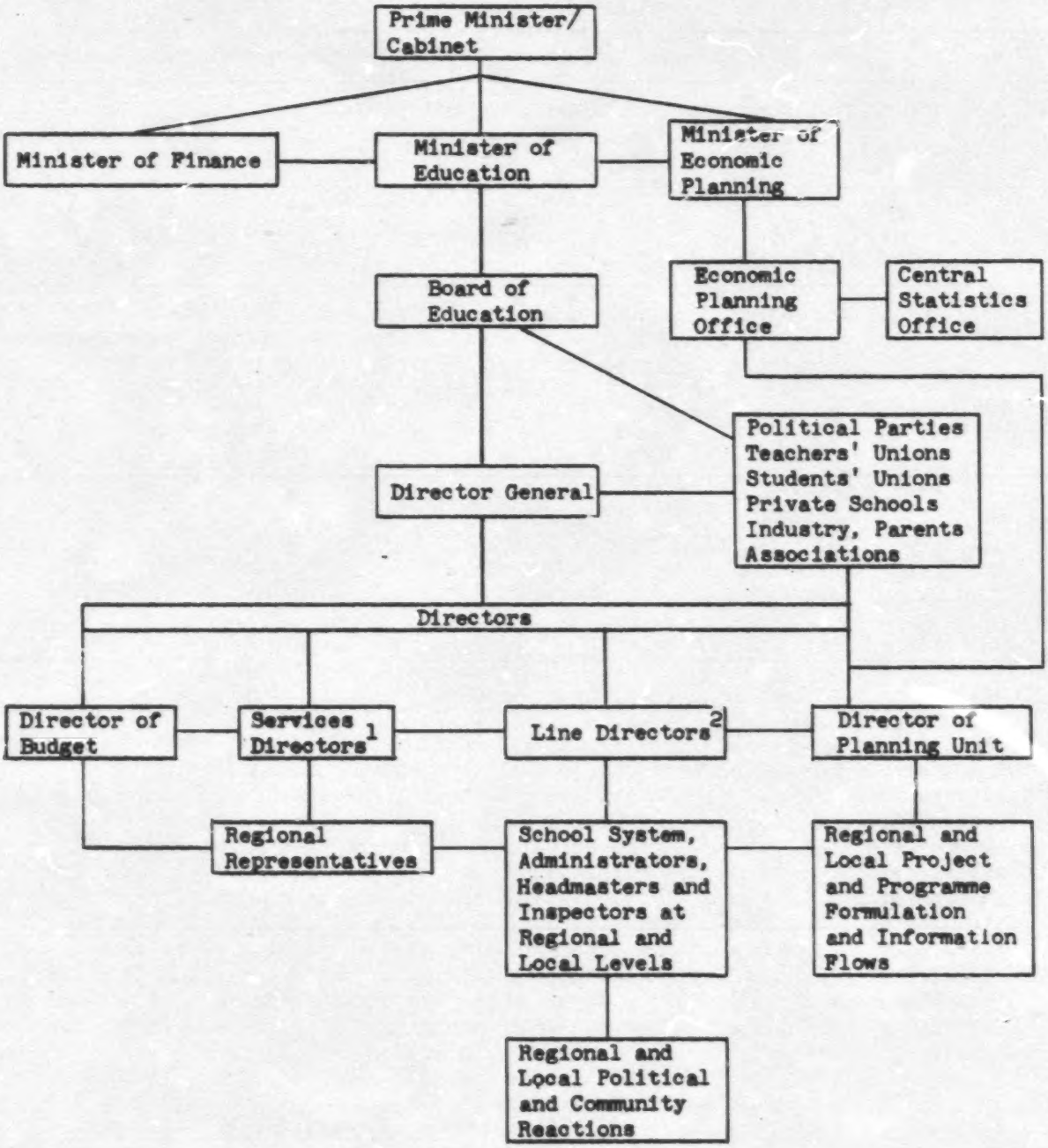
The other part of the matter is the rest of administration. Every administrator, inspector, headmaster or teacher does some planning, organizing, assembling resources, supervising and controlling. The proportion of time spent on each will vary with the job. My essential point is that the success of the 'plan' will depend on the large number of people who fit their different types of planning into the other activities required to transform what shall be done into what has been done. It is a question of attitudes and determining goals, of administrative structures and functions, trained people and political determination.

The organizational division of labour in planning

The modernization of educational administration requires that adequate arrangements be made for the formulation, decision and implementation of the different types of plans at four levels within the educational system. These levels are indicated in the chart below. From this chart you will observe that these levels are the political level, the central professional level and the regional/local level and the 'on-the-job' level.

The goals of education are decided at the first level, by the Minister in consultation with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet and, it is crucial, the Director General and the Directors in the Ministry of Education. Goals may concern the purposes of education; what is taught (e.g. the number of hours of ancient Greek - a major issue in the Greek system), changes in the balance between levels and types of education together with changes in participation in education, or changes in the 'quality' of education. Goals are politically important and therefore, ideally, the Minister should be advised by a Board of Education. This advice should be the result of the deliberations of professional committees of the Board serviced by the planning unit, with representatives from the main Directorates of the Ministry of Education and of the main interested bodies from inside and outside the system, i.e. students, teachers, parents, employers and others. The Director General of Education normally has responsibility for working out an agreed professional position in respect to goals to be decided at the political level.

The Place of the Planning Unit Within the Educational System



1 Personnel, building, equipment, supplies, textbooks, legal advisor, etc.

2 Primary, secondary, technical, higher, adult.

The goals of education are reflected in the perspective plan, the five-year plan and in the annual budgets for education. The planning unit has normally four major functions in relation to the preparation of these plans:

(a) the identification of the resource implications, and of alternatives, involved in giving effect to political goals (e.g. raising of the age of compulsory school attendance by one year or a change in the main language in which education is conducted);

(b) calculation of total educational expenditure on the basis of political directives and formulating alternatives for action within the plan or budget period. This means the costing of the educational 'supply' programmes in terms of investment and also recurrent expenditure. It means discussion of these programmes with the Ministry of Economic Planning and other bodies and of suggesting priorities for programmes in the light of national employment possibilities;

(c) preparation of proposals for programmes to meet resource requirements within the educational system; teachers, buildings, equipment, materials and books;

(d) following through the implementation of programmes which have been decided.

You will observe that this second level of planning is one in which the professional work at the Central National level takes place. Three conditions for successful work may be mentioned. First that the planning unit should have access to regular information flows from the regional and local levels of the educational system, from the other directorates, from the universities and other bodies; this information concerns pupils, teachers, buildings, finance and all the other matters necessary for planning. Second that the planning unit, in co-operation with the operational directorates of the Ministry, should be able to prepare proposals for programmes which reflect the necessary preliminary work at the project level undertaken at the regional and local levels. Third that the Director and staff of the planning unit should have adequate communication with all Directorates within the Ministry and with all the relevant Ministries and bodies outside the Ministry of Education. You will note that, in the chart the Director of the planning works directly to the Director General of Education but is heirarchically equal to the other directors in the Ministry. This is an extremely sensitive question and there are many solutions adopted in practice. I have selected this solution because it seems that the major criterion is ability to communicate and co-operate and a position of equality favours it. You will also see that the Director of Planning is in close contact with the Economic Planning Office (or the Ministry of Finance where there is not an Office), the Central Statistical Office, the universities (where they are not controlled directly by the Ministry of Education) and the bodies directly interested in education.

If the central level is primarily concerned, in planning, with the macro or over-all level, it is the third level, the regional and local level, which is decisive in the formulation and implementation of plans 'on the ground'. In England, for example, 146 local education authorities with responsibilities for populations ranging from 4 million to 30,000 which draw up the detailed projects for investment and operate them. Planning at the central Ministry of Education and Science is concerned for example with national programmes for change in education (e.g. comprehensive, secondary), total finance for the school and university system and teacher supply. In France, which has a greater degree of direct control by the Central Government, work by the regional educational authorities on the carte scolaire is vital in preparing proposals for investment in new educational institutions and in implementing them once the plan has been adopted at the national level and money has been made available from the budget by the central authorities.

It is clear that the regional and local authorities provide the bricks and mortar for the planning of projects and carrying them out. Here is the Achilles heel of educational planning. If the national plan is not directly and usefully related to the total of regional and local requirements for change it will be very difficult to carry out. In other words regional and local education officers must have undertaken a great deal of preliminary work in co-operation with all those responsible for the different aspects of organizing new institutions or changing existing ones in order that lists of feasible projects can, at the national level, add up to feasible programmes. The machinery must also be adequate so that finance is promptly available and contracts can be made and carried out once the green light comes from the capital.

Project identification, costing and detailed organization requires experience and training. It is not only a technical skill. It is also a political function since the location and character of educational institutions is a matter of intense interest for many different groups. Discussion and negotiation at the regional and local levels must take place before any meaningful list of projects can take place. Thus while the total financial and resource limits for regional and local development will be indicated by the central authorities, the detailed working out of development will be undertaken regionally and locally. This is a difficult and time consuming task.

When it comes to implementation speed, money and a structure of agreement are essential. To improve project implementation is not primarily a question of adopting new techniques, such as critical path analysis or programmed budgeting, though these can be very useful. It is a matter of project preparation, arriving at the appropriate decisions and implementing them.

The fourth or 'on-the-job level' concerns the headmasters, teachers, pupils and inspectors (who are the link between the centre and the educational institution). At this level the standing plans concerning what is taught, and how it is taught (timetables, methods, books) are applied and, eventually, reformed. In some countries there is more freedom available for headmasters and teachers to innovate, amend their standing plans, than in others. Since the main question underlying education and educational planning is to determine the purposes of education in the light of the needs of society, here at the 'grass roots' is the level where proposals for change may be tested and discussed. It is also the place where all educational administration including both quantity and quality are ultimately focussed.

Conclusions

Educational planning is the foreward looking part of educational administration and the means by which administration can become modernized in the sense of responding more effectively to the needs for change. If plans at the national level are to serve as a guide to action, rather than as pigeon hole fodder, they must represent co-operative technical work at the four levels of plan formulation, decision making and implementation. National plans for education should reflect preliminary work on goals, programmes, projects and standing plans involving the educational system and the community. This implies a major training task for educational administrators and particularly as concerns the planning staff at the central, regional and local levels.